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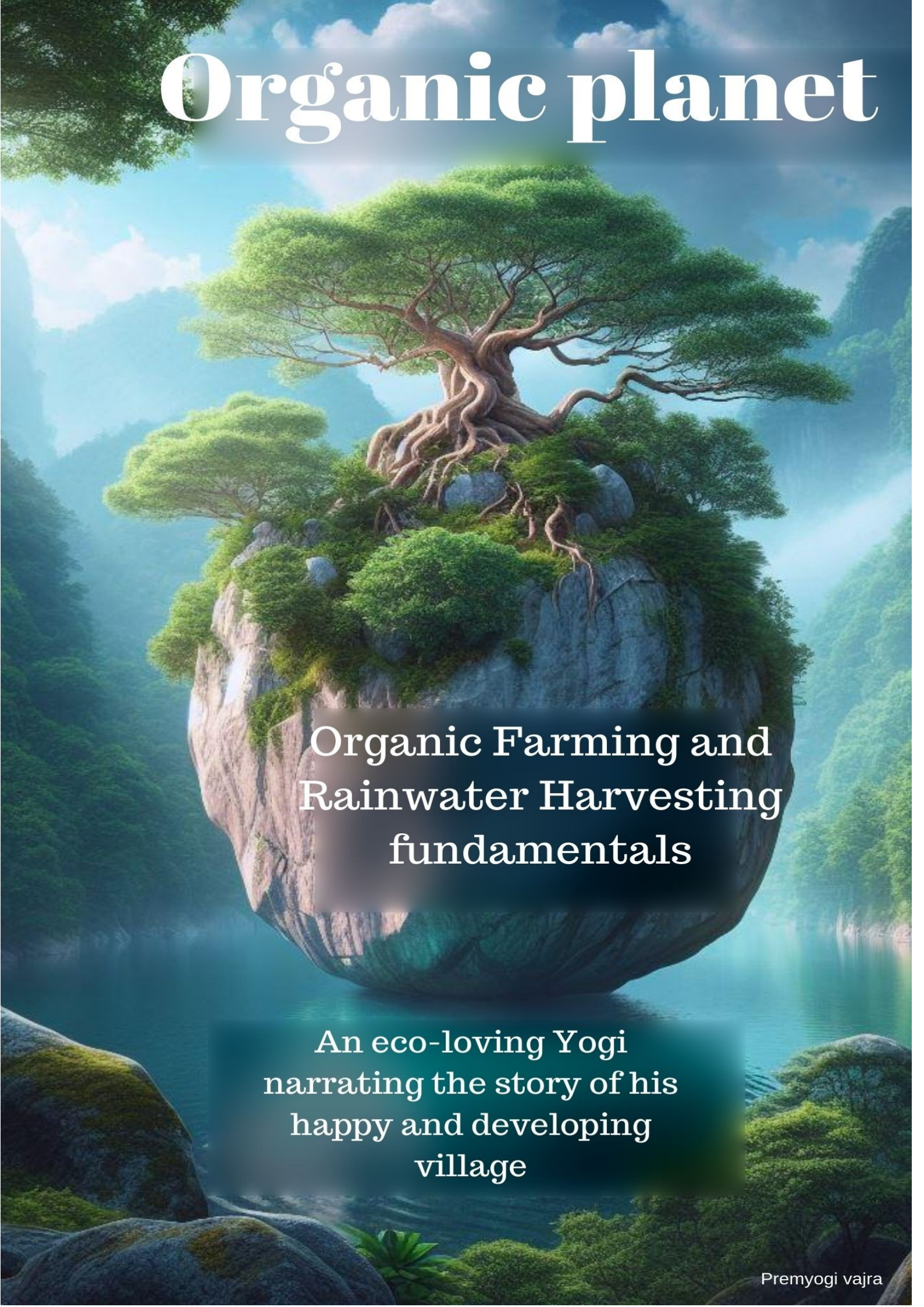

Organic Farming and Rainwater Harvesting fundamentals

An eco-loving Yogi narrating the story of his happy and developing village

Premyogi vajra

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This book is dedicated to all the Organic Lovers.

Author Introduction

Premyogi Vajra was born in the year 1975 in a small village situated in the valleys of Himachal Pradesh, India. He is naturally fond of writing, philosophy, spirituality, yoga, folklore, applied science and tourism. He has also done commendable work in the field of animal husbandry and veterinary medicine. He is also fond of polyhouse farming, organic farming, scientific and water-saving irrigation, rainwater harvesting, kitchen gardening, cow rearing, vermicomposting, website development, self-publishing, music (especially flute playing) and singing. He has also written around ten books on almost all these subjects, the description of which is available on Amazon Author Central, Author Page, Premyogi Vajra. Description of these books is also available on his personal website demystifyingkundalini.com. He was also a Vedic priest for a short time, when he used to perform religious rituals in people's homes with the help of his Vedic priest grandfather. He has had some advanced spiritual experiences (enlightenment and Kundalini awakening). His autobiography including his unique experiences has been specifically shared in the book “Sharirvigyan Darshan – A Modern Kundalini Tantra (A Yogi's Love Story)”. This book is the most important and ambitious book of his life. This book contains the life philosophy of the most important 25 years of his life. He has worked very hard for this book. In a quality and unbiased review on Amazon.in, this book has been reviewed as a five star, best, must read by everyone and excellent book. This book also got five stars in the review of Google Play Book, and this book was rated as good (cool) and of quality. Premyogi Vajra is a mysterious person. He is like an impersonator, who has no definite form of his own. Its actual form depends on the shape and form of samadhi that occurs in one's mind, no matter how it may appear from outside. He is also enlightened, and his Kundalini has also been awakened. He experienced enlightenment naturally/through Prem Yoga, and he experienced Kundalini awakening artificially/through Kundalini Yoga. At the time of natural samadhi, he got the help of symbolic and equal flow Tantra Yoga, whereas at the time of artificial samadhi, he got the help of complete and opposite flow Tantra Yoga mostly due to the contribution of his own efforts.

For more information, please visit the following location-
https://demystifyingkundalini.com/

Book introduction

This book is made up of three book parts. The first part contains practical/experiential information related to earthworm rearing and organic fertilizers. The second part contains practical/experiential information related to the making of polyhouses and the cultivation of crops grown in them. In the third part of the book, all the information related to rainwater harvesting is available in a practical form.

The author spent precious years of his life amidst nature. During that time, he made serious studies regarding earthworm-based organic farming, polyhouse-based farming, and rainwater harvesting, and gained a lot of practical experience by adopting them scientifically and holistically. The author has beautifully expressed his experiences in this book in the form of an autobiography.

This book has the following parts-

1) Part-1 Earthworm Farming – A Spirituality-Mixed Material Hobby
2) Part-2 Polyhouse Farming – A Spirituality-Mixed Material Hobby
3) Part-3 Rainwater Harvesting – A Spirituality-Mixed Material Hobby

part 1
Earthworm farming-
a spiritual-mixed-physical hobby

Book part introduction

This book/book section contains all the information related to earthworm rearing. The author himself reared earthworms for 2-3 years. During that time the author had many physical and spiritual experiences. Of course, the author obtained a lot of information from officials of the concerned department and from the Internet, although the author himself did the work of putting it into daily practice. The author believes that by reading this short book any person can become proficient in earthworm rearing.

Making vermicompost is a very enjoyable hobby. Vermicompost manufacturing also has its own philosophy. Earthworms work hard day and night, so that the unprecedented planet Earth created by God remains intact and can continue to progress. Earthworms are environment lovers. They do not expect any special benefit in return. All they need is dry organic waste to eat and some water to drink. Even the feces and urine of animals, from which all living beings run away, they refine it and turn it into the best kind of fertilizer. That manure contains many types of beneficial bacteria. Trees and plants get all the nutrients in proper quantity from that manure. In this way, earthworms outperform even the biggest finishing machines in terms of work. In a way, earthworms help the environment selflessly. They make up the top soil of the ground.

Friends, I became interested in making vermicompost when the Agriculture Department of Himachal Pradesh was giving a maximum subsidy of Rs 30,000 on a vermicompost unit of approximately 30 feet by 6 feet. It was also roofed with iron sheeting, and also had a small pit outside to collect the excess irrigation water pumped into the unit. That water was black in colour, very beneficial and nutritious. It could also be sprayed on vegetables to ward off insects. To avail that scheme, it was necessary for the beneficiary to have land in his name. The certificate of the place where vermicompost unit was to be built had to be obtained from the Patwari. A departmental form also had to be filled. All these papers had to be submitted to the department. This unit was approved within about 5-6 months. It received a subsidy of Rs 25,000 because supervisors in the department noticed some deficiencies in it. It was of somewhat lower quality than the standard shown by the department. My own expenses were Rs 15,000. In this way my total expenditure was Rs 40,000. This was more because the vermicompost unit was at a distance of about two kilometers from the road. Due to which mules had to be used to carry the construction material, which cost Rs 10,000. The construction materials were brick, cement, sand, iron sheet and angle iron. Vertical angle iron (as pillars) was installed at three places in that unit. Similar angle irons were installed on its other side also. Then they were joined together at the top to form a web on which the roofing sheet could rest. One drawback was that in order to reduce the cost, the thickness of the angle iron was kept at quarter inch. Due to this, the shed started swinging back and forth in the strong winds. However, the roof never fell down because of a web. It would have been better if the standing angle iron had been kept one inch thick. Even the lesser size was enough to make a ceiling web. Its height was 7 feet on one side, and 6 feet on the other, so that the head would not hit the roof, and the roof would also have a sufficient slope to drain off water.

That unit had 6 chambers of equal size, which were built with a brick wall in between. The floor was kept very thin. The quantity of cement in the mortar/mortar mixture used to make it was kept very low, and it was made very thin. This was done so that excess water would seep through the floor into the ground below, and water would not accumulate on the floor.

In too much water, earthworms work less, and may even die, because in too much water they do not get enough air/oxygen to breathe. The entire floor had a slight slope dipping towards one corner. On that sloped side, there was a long drain running the entire length of the outside of the wall. In that drain also a slope was placed towards the pit. Each chamber had a hole about the width of a brick near the level of the floor, which opened into that outside drainage channel. Some air could enter from there also for the earthworms. To strengthen the unit, the outer surface of the walls of the main enclosure was plastered with cement. The inner surface of the wall and the bricks of the inner walls forming the chamber were not plastered, so that the expenditure would be less. My own thought was also that the brick would absorb the excess water, and gradually release some water for the earthworms. However, the inner surface can also be plastered. A number of holes were placed in the walls of the chamber, each the size of a brick's width. When the manure was completely ready in one chamber, and the raw cow dung mixture was finished there, then the worms themselves would go to the other chamber. Perhaps they were attracted by the smell of raw cow dung. Initially, I was afraid of earthworms escaping from the drainage hole in the outer wall. But nothing like this happened. Because earthworms do not go anywhere except food items. The height of the dung chamber was kept at two and a half feet. The maximum air can penetrate is up to this thickness, which is necessary for the earthworms to breathe. But I noticed that earthworms make good compost only up to a depth

of one and a half feet. Below that they go less often and only under compulsion. Now the department has also reduced the length and width of the chamber a lot along with the depth. Due to this, earthworms are able to live closer to each other, which enables them to do better work and reproduce more. Earthworms breathe through their skin. For that, it is very important for their skin to remain wet.
Good quality earthworms were brought from a nearby farmer's already running vermicompost unit. They are Americans. 2-3 kg of cow dung rich in earthworms was brought in an envelope and put in a chamber of the unit. Within 2-3 months the unit was filled with earthworms. Generally, earthworms are not directly visible in the unit, because they gather at some favorite place and remain hidden. Their presence can be felt only by the manure prepared by them. It is said that earthworms do not need much water. But I noticed that they also like more water, sometimes. They produce rich compost only in moderate moisture. Where there was more standing water, only earthworm eggs were visible. Humidity should not be less. They themselves search for a place in the chamber with favorable humidity, temperature and air. Wherever these three conditions are good, they settle there.
The average age of an earthworm is about 1-2 years. Many earthworms continue to be born every day, many continue to grow old, and many continue to die. Due to this, one becomes aware of the instability and impermanence of life every moment, which strengthens the philosophical viewpoint. Also, inspired by this, the man remains active to make his life successful. He keeps trying to get maximum benefits from his human life, in which spiritual benefits are also important.
I built a water tank at the same height along with the vermicompost unit. Therefore, water from it could not reach the vermicompost unit by gravity and through pipes. So I had to carry water in buckets and pour it. I used to use a bucket with a fountain. It took a lot of time, and not enough water could fall. Therefore, I opened its front flower and placed my hand on the mouth of the fountain pipe and started watering it directly. Even though I had to carry water from the tank only for 15-20 steps, I still felt very tired. Then I started understanding the importance of water flowing automatically due to gravity, and started thinking that if only the tank was at a little height, then I could fit the pipes and do other work in the surrounding area without any worry. Many times the idea of installing an electric tolu pump to lift water came up, but it would have been expensive because my unit was small and domestic.
By the way, let me tell you that I built the tank much later. Earlier, I used to fill two 200 liter drums there through a water pipe. That water was for drinking, and came from a high place. Water in those drums would last for two-three weeks. I used to fill the tank built later only with rain water flowing on open ground. Its construction will be explained further in the section on MNREGA or in another book related to MNREGA. I had collected water from the entire upper slope up to that rainwater harvesting tank. I did this by digging one or two oblique drains on both sides from the top of the tank. Those drains were spreading outwards upwards. This created a very large water catchment area for the tank. Many times a single heavy rain would fill the tank half full. That tank was of approximately 20,000 liter capacity. In between, I used to clean those drains by removing leaves etc., so that there is no problem in the flow of water to the tank.
During the rainy season, minimal water is required for the unit because there is sufficient moisture in the air all around. Some more water is required during dry winter days. There is also a risk of the unit's temperature falling due to adding too much water. In low temperatures, earthworms perform only marginally, and do not even grow. Their real growth and reproduction take place only during the rainy season. At that time, only their eggs are visible all around the unit. They are yellow in color, and about the size of sago. If you break a mature egg, one or two microscopic earthworms come out of it. Earlier I used to wonder what would happen when the earthworms grow too much in the earthworm chamber. But it doesn't happen like that. Their numbers are self-controlled. I have never seen them increasing beyond a necessary and safe limit. Similarly, earlier I had this misconception about them that they would feel repelling, because they would be big and fat, the laziest earthworms. But it is not like that. They are not actual earthworms. They are thin and small, very agile, and interesting. They don't feel repelling.
I did not irrigate the unit during the rainy season. At most, if there were dry days, I would release a fine spray of water from the fountain once a month, so that there could be slight moisture on the upper raw surface of the unit (bed etc.). In winter I used to irrigate the unit thoroughly once a week. I used to

put two fountain buckets of 15 liters each in one chamber. In summer I used to deep irrigate the unit two days a week. Used to put 4-5 fountain buckets in one chamber.

Earlier I used to think that animals like birds, crows, snakes, mongoose, iguanas etc. might eat the earthworms. But it did not happen. Earthworms are very mobile. They never live on open surfaces. They go deep into the depths. One reason may also have been that animals could not have come due to the roof over the unit. However, such complaints are received in many places. I haven't had any animals attack my other unit without a roof either. Maybe depends on place of installing unit. Snakes hardly eat earthworms. The most feared animal is the iguana. Because it can dig into the compost with its claws and find earthworms.

Earthworm-eating insects continue to breed inside the compost. The most harmful is the centipede. These can be as long and thick as the size of a pen's refill. Its hundreds of legs are lined up all over the body on both sides. They run like snakes and very fast. They should be crushed on sight. They also bite if touched. It feels like a bee has stung. But the pain is even stronger and lasts longer. Once I even found a scorpion while removing the manure. It is better if leather gloves are worn on hands. Another such harmful insect is Malesha (in Pahari language). It also damages the crop. It remains round like a cashew nut. Is white. The eye points are black. Is spongy. Can be approximately four times the size of cashew nuts. Throw it out in the open, so that it cannot enter the soil quickly. The bird comes running to eat it. There is no news of being bitten by it. Carefully, the grass on top of the unit should be removed with a hoe or sickle, as snakes may be hiding anywhere in the weeds. The hand should not be inserted directly.

Initially, I used to irrigate the chamber by walking on outside instead of on top of it. I had heard that to keep the pile aerated, one should not compact it too much. Later I started walking freely. I didn't feel any difference. Similarly, I had heard that a heavy compost heap should also be turned once a month, so that it becomes aerated, and the earthworms reach the entire heap in equal quantity. It took a lot of hard work and strength. Instead of benefiting from it, I found it to be a loss because many a times earthworms would die due to the blows of spade etc. In fact, the earthworms' own natural system was disturbed. A shovel should never be used. Many earthworms get cut by it and die. If possible, use spades sparingly in the fields too, because earthworms keep roaming in the soil of the fields. In fact, by moving around, the earthworms themselves keep the heap tunnelled and ventilated. Due to this, the temperature of the heap also becomes normal, and in a way the mixing of the heap also takes place automatically.

I had heard that earthworms die due to excessive heat generation in compost. But in reality this does not happen. They always find some safe and cool corner for themselves. However, dung-containing waste should not be dumped directly into the unit. Let it lie outside in a big pile for 15 days. During that time high temperature is generated in it. Due to this, disease causing germs and weed seeds get burnt and die. That pile also becomes soft, which earthworms like very much. However, if the compost in the unit gets too hot, even by irrigating it with cold water its temperature drops.

Earthworms eat any organic matter, provided it is rotting. Earthworms also increase the rate of decomposition. The needle-like leaves of the pine tree, which remain intact even after ordinary composting, decompose quickly and completely in an earthworm pit. Therefore, earthworm pit is a boon for slow rotting compost. In fact, earthworms continuously eat the rotten layer on the leaves and keep them naked. Along with this, the rotting germs of their feces also get mixed in the leaves. In this way the leaf rots quickly.

Surprisingly, the earthworm does not have teeth, yet it rots even the hardest organic matter. In fact, they suck and swallow small pieces of half-rotted organic matter. You can comfortably place the earthworm on your palm. This proves how innocent and non-violent an earthworm is. We should learn these qualities from them.

I had heard that vermicompost is ready in one and a half months. But I never got it ready in less than two and a half months, and that too in the rainy season. In winter, it was prepared with difficulty only once in the entire 5-6 month season. Perhaps in southern India or the plains it is prepared in less time. Even in summer it took 3-4 months. The reason for this could also be that the depth of my unit was two and a half feet. Earthworms used to make compost from it in two shifts. In the first shift they

used to rot the top one and a half feet layer. Then, when the air would cross downwards, and that one and a half feet layer would shrink to half a foot, then the earthworms would rot the lower one foot layer in the second shift. After vermicompost becomes mature compost, it shrinks to about one-third to one-fourth of its original size.

I also kept checking each pit from time to time. I used to remove a part of the grass bed placed on top and check the depth of 2-4 inches at any one place with my hand and spade. When earthworm manure is ready, it becomes granular and brittle like tea leaves. Bedding is kept on top so that the earthworms get protection and the temperature is also maintained. In winter its thickness was increased, so that some warmth could be maintained inside. Many times, if there is too much heat in the dung below, the earthworms come up and become safe in the bed. Actually, they prefer to live at some depth. Where my unit was, it was a moist, shady, and wind-free place. Earthworms are happier at such places. But there should also be sunlight, so that the temperature does not fall in winter. The only drawback of my place was that there was less sunlight in winter. I also thought of installing polysheet curtains, but gave up because it would have been expensive and impractical. What I did do was pack a bed of thick straw between the wall and the dung heap, so that it would become insulation. Another way was to put empty but thick jute sacks on the surface bed of the unit. These measures provided some benefit.

When manure was prepared in a chamber, its irrigation would be stopped 15-20 days before it was taken out. Due to this, the manure loses its smoothness and becomes crumbly. This makes it easier to extract and filter. Earthworms also move towards the smoothness of the surface, repelled by matured manure crumbles. I had kept one chamber empty so that I could keep the sifted manure in it. I used a large sand sifter mesh. After fitting it in the empty chamber slanted, I would carry the prepared manure from the chamber and pour it on its upper end. Then I used to tap the mesh with my hand, due to which the mixture filtered on the mesh and rolled down. In the end, there was a little thick material left at the bottom, which could not be filtered. It contained small and big lumps of cow dung, half-rotted peels of trees, thick and half-rotted branches/pieces of trees, some pebbles, and all the earthworms. Many earthworms are found inside the dung lumps. Throwing out the pebbles from it, I would put 2-4 handfuls of the coarse material collected from single sift into the raw manure chamber to rot. The manure that was filtered was clean, odorless and suitable for packing in envelopes. There was no smell anywhere in the unit. Nor were there any flies or mosquitoes. This is a great solution to prevent flies and mosquitoes from spreading in the cattle shed. The unit should be some 100-200 meters away from the cattle shed. Keep collecting dung directly from the cattle shed and putting it in the unit every day. Due to this, there will be no pile of dung near the cattle shed, which will prevent flies and mosquitoes there.

In many big farms, electric motor operated filtering mesh is also installed. It has to be run at low speed only, otherwise the earthworms become disturbed/weakened by the shocks, and many even die. However, many people do not consider this method suitable for earthworms. A friend of mine had made a filtering device himself by adopting the indigenous method. He had connected the domestic motor to a filtering mesh with the help of some iron rods and wheels. However, he also said that he does not see any special benefit from it.

In fact, all the above activities were taught to me by an experienced elder. In fact, he worked in our house on monthly wages. He had once received training in vermicompost under some government scheme. I learned all the methods while working with him.

I found the above sifting method somewhat difficult and impractical. That method was suitable for packing the fertilizer in small envelopes and selling it directly in the shop. But there was no demand for it in the market. People used to rely on chemical fertilizers even for pots, because it gave immediate results. Some people who understood the benefits of vermicompost used to buy cheap, low quality and adulterated organic fertilizers from the plains. Therefore I had to use it for my fields only. So then I started collecting manure without filtering it. For this, first I used to dig the chamber to a depth of 6 inches. Waited for 5 minutes. In that time the earthworms would go below the carved layer. In fact, where excavation takes place, earthworms do not return for several days. I used to collect that carved layer and put it in the empty chamber. Then I would do the same till the next 6 inch layer. This

way the last 6 inch layer would have been covered. A large crowd of earthworms used to gather there. Then I would dig out the bottom 2-inch layer carefully, so as not to hurt the earthworms. Do not use a shovel. The hoe used should not be sharp from the front. In the last two inches of the floor layer, the weight of earthworms was much more than that of manure. I started sifting it first, so that I could collect one or two particles of manure. Then I thought why bother the earthworms, and why not leave it as it is. I did the same. When raw dung was put in that chamber, those earthworms themselves came up to eat the dung. That last heap should not be kept empty for a long time, otherwise earthworms may encounter damage. It is said that fully rotten vermicompost is harmful for earthworms. Therefore, quickly put the raw material in it, so that the earthworms come up to eat it.

Vermicompost becomes very light, hence it is very easy to carry. So I decided to put it in distant fields. Later, when my polyhouse was ready nearby, I started putting it in the polyhouse. It gives immense benefits in polyhouse, because it does not flow here and there due to rain or open water, and does not dry up even due to sunlight and wind. Raw dung is heavy, so the unit should be located close to the cattle shed. My unit was 200 meters away, so a lot of energy was wasted in carrying dung.

Earthworm rearing also has its own philosophy. It is similar to Tantric philosophy and Karmayoga. In Tantra Yoga, Kundalini has been considered like the form of a serpent. She moves with the flexibility of the body like a serpent. Earthworms are also like snakes. Therefore there can be a mutual relationship between earthworm and Kundalini. I felt the same way. After starting earthworm farming, my Kundalini started growing rapidly.

Seen in another way, earthworms are great workers. They remain engaged in their work whole-heartedly, and do not expect anything in return except food and water. They survive only on dry waste material which is of no use to anyone. In this way they keep the environment clean. If they do not help in cleaning, there is a possibility of spread of many serious diseases. They are loyal servants, and are selfless in their work. Man works only out of fear of his master. A person who works considering it as his duty is rare. The owner does not need to stand near the earthworm with a stick all the time. Just give them food and water, and they will continue doing their work for many days or weeks without asking for anything. During that time, if the owner wishes, he can travel abroad and come back.

Earthworms can also be reared indoors. They can also be reared in a small and simple plastic dustbin. Make some holes in its bottom, so that the extra water keeps coming out. Place it on a tray etc., so that extra water does not fall on the ground. Keep pouring that water back into the earthworm bin whenever necessary, so that its nutritional value does not get wasted.

While this kitchen farming will fulfill the hobby and will give subtle tantric power, the organic fertilizer obtained from it will help in the good growth of potted flowers and abundant vegetables will also grow in the kitchen garden.

Actually, most of the earthworm rearing is done in the open. There is an open field. There is no roof on it. The yield is higher and the growth of earthworms is also higher. But the quality of its manure is low. Many of its nutrients flow here and there with water, and are also carried away by wind and sunlight.

Even in open spaces, earthworms can move around only in moist soil. They do not run above the ground, nor penetrate dry and sterile soil. Even if there is rocky ground below, they are not able to run down. Well, they have gone a little distance to hide. Afraid of the movement of manure removal, they enter the soil below. When new organic matter is added, they rise above the soil again in 1-2 days.

At one place I saw that there was a rough platform made of stones on a 60 degree steep slope. That place was just outside the cattle shed. Therefore, when all the dung and other organic waste inside was thrown outside, it got collected on that slope. Due to this a big heap was formed there. There were countless earthworms in it. They quickly converted all the raw materials into manure. When that manure was removed, they would enter between the stones below. The holes between those stones were filled with moist and soft manure, beneath which was moist and soft soil. When new raw material again appeared on that empty surface, they would again come up in the crowd and become active, and would quickly dispose of it.

Nitrogen is the most important among those perishable elements. Its deficiency has the most adverse effect on the yield of plants. The system of checking the quality of fertilizer has not yet developed

properly in India. Because of this, the price of compost made in open space is equal to that of compost made in closed space. This is the reason why people shy away from opening closed forms. More investment has to be made in building a closed farm and less fertilizer is also produced in it. Although the quality of the compost made in it is of high quality. Similarly, at many places, people dry the dirt from drainage pipes, grind it and mix it with vermicompost. The facility to test it is not available in most places. If it is somewhere, it is very expensive. Even customers are not aware about this matter. This also discourages the real fertilizer manufacturers. Although the above small vermicompost unit is best for fulfilling hobbies and attaining divine Tantric power.

Many people think that vermicompost works miraculously. In fact, the miracle is seen only through chemical fertilizers, although it is applied externally, for a short period of time, and at a huge cost to the environment. Vermicompost works slowly and completely. By adding earthworm manure, even sandy soil gets the properties of clay soil, because earthworm manure has a smoothness. Similarly, very clayey soil also loses its excess lubricity by adding vermicompost. This happens because the particles of earthworm manure get stuck between the particles of clay soil, and prevent them from joining together and forming a lump. It is believed that it also contains biochemicals that help in converting stones into soil. It is also believed that germs that fix nitrogen from the air also work in the earthworm's stomach. This is because their stomach is anaerobic/airless. Nitrogen fixing bacteria thrive in similar conditions. In fact, there are other categories of beneficial bacteria in their stomachs. They also produce hormones which help in the growth of plants. Through their excreta, they get mixed with the soil of the fields, and continue doing many beneficial works there for a long time. That is why it is said that vermicompost should not be allowed to dry completely. There should be slight moisture in it. Therefore, while storing it, it has to be lightly sprinkled with water several times, especially in summer. While mixing in the field, there should be moisture in the soil also. Manure should be mixed with the soil immediately. This can also be done by plowing. If it remains lying on the surface of the field, it will dry up there. This will not only cause loss of germs, its nitrogen will also evaporate into the air. Nitrogen is also obtained from urea, but it is harmful because it is chemical.

Just as among the twenty-four gurus of Yogi Dattatreya, many gurus were in the form of inanimate objects (wind, clouds etc.) and many gurus were in the form of small animals (fish etc.), similarly why can't my guru be an earthworm? I got many types of teachings from earthworms. One lesson I also learned was that you should chew your food thoroughly. Actually, the saliva coming out of the earthworm's mouth is the main contributor to the smoothness and moisture in the earthworm manure. This means that if we chew food in our mouth for a longer time, more saliva will mix with the food. Due to this, it will pass easily through the digestive organs, due to which it will be digested properly, and will also not cause constipation. Thinking this, I initially started eating the roti by chewing it separately and slowly. Due to this, more saliva was produced by rubbing dry bread. Then I applied a little ghee between the two rotis, rolled them together and started eating. After that I drank a glass of water comfortably. Felt more benefit than that. I used to eat rice separately, vegetables separately and pulses separately. Due to this, each type of food got its own distinct/special and natural taste. In the end I would mix a little of everything and eat it. It was a lot of fun, and a lot of satisfaction. Actually, I also used to do Kundalini Yoga, which also gave some benefit. Before doing this, I was never satisfied with food. Perhaps earlier there was excess saliva left in the salivary glands, which did not allow the hunger in the mind to be quenched.

Earthworms are sometimes seen in pairs in farms. They are beautifully wrapped around each other like snakes. In fact they are reproducing. Once I was speaking as a guest in a camp organized by the Agriculture Department. In the mid, I told the farmer brothers that opening a vermicompost farm also provides entertainment, and they keep showing colorful film scenes. Hearing this, they became very excited and started laughing, and some even started clapping. My talk inspired many people to open earthworm farms, and after seeing its benefits, everyone started wondering why they had not considered it till now. My practical and inspiring speech was greatly appreciated by all the officers present. I give full credit for it to my Guru Maharaj.

Now let me tell you the daily routine of my farm. I didn't work there every day. Whenever the empty chamber had to be filled with cow dung after 2-3 months, the dung had to be carried continuously for

2-3 days. I had to stay out of the house for a week in case of livelihood and earning. I used to come home only for Sundays. That day I would inspect the vermicompost unit. If necessary, I would add water to it, separate the manure, filter the manure, and transport the raw cow dung from a distance and put it in the unit. I would put the prepared manure in the fields or in the polyhouse. This way my day would pass comfortably, busy and positively. People around me would also be happy to see my dedication, hard work, happiness and my social interaction. The vermicompost unit also helped in the development of these qualities. Perhaps they also get indirect inspiration for making vermicompost. Although due to some hesitation they did not take advantage of that government scheme. Firstly, due to laziness they were not able to collect the documents for it. Secondly, they understood that earthworms themselves could grow in the open dung heap outside their cattle shed, so what was the need to build a closed unit. They could not understand even after being told its benefits. The third reason was that they considered that work to be a poor, vermin-ridden work. Whatever it may be, people were happy and open after seeing my work. The reason for this was that I became a Karmayogi due to the invisible inspiration of earthworms. They used to do all the work throughout the week like a selfless Karmayogi, and I was getting the benefit from it.

Already, on days of the week when I was home, I wanted to do work that was solely mine. It would not have been a work with anyone's help. I also spent a lot of time working with my family. But that work was not counted. All that work was considered to be that of the family members, not my own. Those tasks were, bringing wood, grass etc. from the forest; Animal grazing and other farm work. Only I used to do the work of vermicompost. Other people were not interested in him. That's why people started considering it as my work alone, and also started giving me credit for it. That started inspiring me to move forward. Now I often spent one day of the week working in the vermicompost unit. Sometimes, when there was very little time left, I would also help my family members.

Once in my dream I met the spirits of earthworms of my farm. They are like silent darkness. There is a strange and dark light inside them. I felt in that dream that these self-qualities of them were increasing due to favorable conditions for their life. They were very happy there. They feel all their experiences like a calm, cheerful, light, pain-free and blissful dream.

part 2
Polyhouse farming-
a spiritual-mixed-physical hobby

Friends, polyhouse farming has its own craze. While this fulfills the hobby, one also gets fresh and organically grown vegetables to eat. If the polyhouse is big, good income can also be earned by selling vegetables. One specialty of polyhouse is that we can grow vegetables in it without any chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Therefore the vegetables grown in it are best for health. They are very good for a yogi. Anyway, the body and mind of yogis are very sensitive. They completely reject chemical things.

Even in the ancient cultural heritage of our country India, plants have been considered living and divine forms. The tree is also considered to be a living creature. Sir Jagdish Chandra Basu of modern India created many such scientific machines which closely captured the life of trees and plants. He proved through many scientific experiments that plants have life, and they also express many emotional sensations like moving animals. All these things prove that Polyhouse is, in a way, a facility-rich home for those living beings who have had to remain homeless for centuries. In this way, Polyhouse is an excellent type of worship or service to God.

Friends, I became interested in polyhouses when I started meeting the agriculture officers of Himachal pradesh often. They used to invite me to various camps as a guest farmer-speaker. In those cases I used to meet them in their offices also. Many times there used to be discussions with them regarding the polyhouse. I also took the help of the internet for further research. In fact the Internet only provides additional help. To start any work, inspiration from a human expert/guru is definitely needed. Only then is that work able to give full results in every respect. However, knowledge can also be obtained directly from the internet. Well, at first I was hesitant in adopting Polyhouse. One expert even discouraged me. He told that to run a polyhouse, full-time service of a scientifically skilled person is required. The common man of the house cannot run it. Actually, he was only telling the truth. But it is also true that no man comes by learning from mother’s womb. Small beginnings eventually turn into big things. I used to stay out of the house in search of work. I couldn't believe the expertise of my family members. Therefore, once again I had postponed applying for a subsidized polyhouse from the government.

After about six months, the dream of building a polyhouse started awakening in my mind again. I again started visiting the offices of agricultural officials I knew. In the midst of various farmer-related discussions, I used to include polyhouse-related discussions as well. First I started thinking about making a polyhouse kitchen garden. Its size was 40 square meters (10 m by 4 m), which was the minimum. But it was small and round like a rainbow, meant only for nursery growing. A man could not even stand straight in it. Therefore it was inadequate even for kitchen gardening. The second and larger size was 105 square meters (15 meters by 7 meters). It was a big polyhouse. That was enough for the kitchen garden. But it was difficult to do commercial farming in it. It could not generate enough income for one person to survive. It could meet the needs of fresh vegetables for a small to medium sized family. Therefore, the agriculture officials advised me to set up a polyhouse of 250 square meters (25 meters by 10 meters). I could not take any decision at that time. I left that decision for the future. At that time I thought it best to apply for a polyhouse. The choice of polyhouse was sought only after the application was sanctioned. I filled a form and applied. Although my turn came after 2-3 years, because the line of applicants was very long.

Once I had gone to the house of a farmer friend to look after cows. There that friend showed me his big polyhouse. The plastic coverings of its roof and walls were badly damaged by the monkeys. Maybe that's why it seemed so big to me. I got scared after seeing that mess. Many types of aluminum pipes, big and small, were installed in it. I also started to fear monkeys. However, agriculture officials said that the problem of monkeys comes from installing it in the forest and away from home.

I had seen many polyhouses and also read and heard a lot about them. But you can't believe anything until you try it yourself. The best and practical information is available only then. Well, after two years I got a call from the agriculture office. I was informed about the sanction of my polyhouse. It was also told that the owner of the polyhouse will have to go for training related to the polyhouse for five-seven days. That training was completely free. It was organized by the Agriculture Department itself. I had applied for that polyhouse in the name of my uncle, who was middle-aged. They were already doing

agriculture, so they did not face any problem in polyhouse farming. I dropped him at the training center 20-30 kilometers away from home. A group of many farmers had gathered there. He enjoyed the training very much. He liked the environment, education system, food, lifestyle, circle of friends etc. very much there. All goods and services appeared to be of high quality. In fact, he had never gone out of the home due to the environment of illiteracy. He had said all these things with his own mouth. When after the completion of the training, I reached the training center with a friend to pick him up, it was a lot of fun. That was a university. There were very beautiful views all around. There were lush green scenes. There were clean roads. There were beautiful and colorful charts in two big buildings, in which various information was given. Various types of exhibitions were held at places. Well, I recognized uncle in the crowd, who was standing with another, familiar looking man. Both of them remained friendly and had a great time during training. Uncle made us both meet. Actually he was a Vedic priest. He had applied for a polyhouse in his name for his father. He had retired as a government teacher. He was fond of Polyhouse, and could devote all his time to it.

Now the time has come for the selection of polyhouse. Officials told 3 predefined sizes of polyhouse. They were of three sizes, 105 square meters (15 by 7), 250 square meters (25 by 10), and 500 square meters (50 by 10). Sizes other than these were not possible because frames of only these three sizes were available. The fields themselves were required to be of sizes equal to these sizes. I had measured the size of the fields, but still had doubts. So the officials sent the man from the sponsored company to inspect my fields. There is actually a long list of sponsored companies. When I asked the departmental officer to select the company, he suggested the name of the nearest, famous and small company with satisfactory work. Well, the owner of that company reached my house the very next day. No field of 500 square meter size was found. He identified a field for a 250 square meter polyhouse. Two fields were identified for polyhouses of 105 square meters, and one field was identified for polyhouse of 40 square meters. All the fields were near the house. In fact, at least two feet extra space should be available outside the long plastic wall on either side of the polyhouse. It is meant to move around outside the polyhouse. If not on both sides, then at least there should be enough space for walking on one side. Similarly, there should be at least two feet of walkway space in front of the door of the polyhouse. A space of at least 6-8 feet is required outside the wall on the opposite side of the short/wide plastic wall containing the door. This is because there is a system for folding the long wall envelopes to the top and unfolding them to the bottom. Due to this the wall opens and closes respectively. The system for opening and closing the crest/top/roof windows of the polyhouse is also there. Well, the owner of the company also gave instructions to straighten the identified areas, cut and prune the trees above them, and open up the narrow areas. He was advising us to build as many polyhouses as possible. Maybe he is also looking at his commission. The Agriculture Officer had also asked to install as many polyhouses as possible in one turn. He told that many people, after getting a polyhouse installed, understand its benefits, then they regret thinking why they did not get more than one installed. They have to apply again, which puts them at the back of the line again. In this way it takes years for their turn to come again.

I discussed it in detail with my uncle that day. Actually there was severe shortage of water in our village. Although we had already built two big size tanks under the rain water harvesting scheme of MNREGA, still rain water also has its limits. I will describe the construction of those tanks under MNREGA further. The second shortage was of money. We had only a limited amount of cash at that time, and we did not want to borrow from anyone for an uncertain future. There was a need to level some area in a 105 square meter farm. We ourselves had less time, and no laborers etc. were available at that time. Therefore it was dropped. At that time we did not have the capacity to set up a nursery. Therefore, the 40 square meter polyhouse was also abandoned. Finally a 250 square meter polyhouse and a 105 square meter polyhouse/farm were selected. Both were in very suitable places. There were no strong winds and the sunshine was pleasant. Both the fields were on lower ground than the water tanks. Therefore due to gravity the water pressure was good till there.

The next day I reached the company office along with my uncle. I made him sign the agreement form/affidavit for partnership with the company. Besides, some money was also deposited in the form of beneficiary share. Our turn was far behind in the line, so it would take more than a month for our

turn to get fitted with the polyhouse. I had to go out for some work, so after getting the recommendation from the Agriculture Officer, the work started within 15-20 days. Many even have to reach higher. The company's employees continued working in our house for three-four days. For so many days they used to sleep in our house at night. They were also working overtime because Diwali was near and they wanted to finish the work quickly. Their work is very technical and efficient. The plastic sheet should be absolutely taut, otherwise it may flutter and burst due to strong winds. It is fixed on the pipe frames with screws. The screw driver machine was also modern, which along with drilling the holes, could also install and tighten the screws automatically. First of all, a network of G.I. pipes is made. This work is done by welding. Therefore, electricity should also be available near the farm. Many companies also make webs by connecting them with nuts and bolts. This allows the entire polyhouse unit to be moved from one farm to another. However, there is a need to do this only in very few cases. One of its disadvantages is that the nuts and bolts keep getting loose with time. A technical efficiency should be that there should not be any open space of walls or ceiling which is not covered with plastic sheet. Sometimes heating may have to be provided inside in cold weather. Heat escapes out through this open space. There was a gap of half a foot in the corner sheet of one wall of my polyhouse. When I called the agriculture officer and informed him about the deficiency, the company employee came on a bike the very next day and fixed the plastic sheet there.

Friends, two big frames of polyhouse come attached. Although they are light, but carrying them is awkward. They are big shapes like bows. We had employed 2 Nepali Gurkhas to carry them from the road to the field (a journey of about one and a half kilometres). They jokingly called it Ram-Dhanush. Due to this difficulty in carrying them, it took more time than necessary to carry them.

Once the plastic sheet cabin is built, the internal work is done. There is also a small cabin attached to the main cabin. It is for changing shoes etc., for dipping feet in medicinal water, for changing clothes, and for keeping tools etc. We could not do any special formalities like this. Yes, a 250 liter water drum was definitely kept in it. Used to fill it with a pipe. Many times that water was useful here and there. By the way, irrigation was done through drip irrigation. That small cabin has doors on both sides. It has to be kept closed. Insects accidentally introduced from outside get trapped in it and die due to the heat generated in it. The bottom wall, running the length of the main cabin, is made of plastic mesh with fine holes. Air can flow in and out through it, and no insects can enter through it. Polysheet is applied only on the long wall about one and a half to two feet near the ground level. There is no mesh there. This is so that water does not come inside. Also, carbon dioxide gas, being heavy, settles down, which plants use to make their food.

After the cabin of the polyhouse is built, a shade net is installed in it. It is a green mesh, which slows down the sunlight coming from above. There is a difference of 10 degrees between the temperature below and above it. This protects the plants during the high summer months. It can be opened and closed, like a window curtain. There is a sprinkler net below it. They are actually like small fountains, which hang at places. That is connected to the main pipeline of the polyhouse through a valve. When their valve is opened, a fine mist-like spray of water comes out from them. That spray reduces the temperature of the polyhouse by 10 degrees. Nowadays, hi-tech polyhouses have also been built. When their temperature sensors sense excessive heat, the sprinklers automatically turn on. Then when the temperature becomes normal, they switch off on their own. Similarly, when the sensor sensing the amount of water in the ground senses less water than required, then the drip system automatically starts, and after scheduled irrigation, it automatically switches off. In this way all operations run automatically. But such polyhouses are very expensive and can be fitted only by businessmen.

In the form of water system in the polyhouse, a thick plastic pipe (about two inches thick) is laid along the door, across the entire width of the polyhouse. From one corner, a pipe of the same thickness goes upwards, to which the sprinkler system is connected. A pipe much thinner than the main door pipe and connected to it is laid throughout the length of the polyhouse. Many such pipes are laid parallel to each other at a gap of 2 feet. Each pipe is for one bed of crop. That pipe is thin, strange

and black in colour. No matter how much you twist it, it doesn't break. In this way, as many lines of plants can be planted as there are pipes. There is one hole at a distance of about 4-6 inches in the entire length of that pipe. From there, water keeps falling drop by drop for irrigation. One drop falls in about a second. There is also a valve/key/tap for on-off.

The main thick door pipe inside is connected to the filter unit installed outside the polyhouse. It also has a gauge to measure water pressure. The filter unit is fitted with a disc filter. In this, thin plastic discs (like rings) are tightly tightened one above the other on a cylinder (which is approximately equal to a one liter bottle). Those discs have fine stripes. When those discs join together, a very thin space is formed between those stripes, through which clean water comes in after filtering. The dirt remains trapped in those discs. To clean them, they are taken out by opening the screw at the top of the cylinder. Then they are fitted again after washing in open water using buckets etc.

The suction unit is also connected to the filter unit itself. A pipe coming out of it is immersed in a bucket of water. Fertilizer for the entire polyhouse is dissolved in that water. The suction unit sucks all the water from the bucket. That water gets mixed with the irrigation water and is supplied to all the plants in equal quantity through the drip system installed in the entire polyhouse. But this suction unit works only if water is given external pressure from behind with the electric Tolu pump. The pressure of gravity is so low that irrigation is possible, but the suction unit does not work. Our system operated by gravity, so we had to add the fertilizer water by hand. However, there was very little need for it because we often used organic fertilizers. It does not dissolve in water. However, if water is coming from a big height, then the suction unit works.

There was dirty water flowing from here and there in our irrigation tank. Its color was also green because of the moss. If it was poured directly into the drip line, it would block the drip holes. Due to this the drip pipes would have to be replaced. Actually, there is a network of very tiny tubes inside the drip unit, due to which the water does not fall in a stream but in drops, no matter how high the water pressure is from behind. Absolutely clear water should enter it. Due to turbidity of the water, the filter disc had to be cleaned once a month. If the water is very dirty, it may have to be cleaned even once every week.

Drip irrigation system has many benefits. Due to this, water remains limited only to the area around the roots of the plants. While this saves water, the water soluble nutrients also do not disappear by seeping into the depths of the soil and here and there. Due to this, water swamp does not form around the roots. Due to this, the soil there remains moist, airy and friable. In such a situation the yield of weeds also reduces. In fact, running the drip for 10-15 minutes provides a lot of irrigation. It seems as if a drop or two is falling. But even if a drop or two falls at various places in the entire polyhouse, a lot of water gets washed away. Once, my minor daughter, who was desperate to become a hi-tech farmer, out of curiosity and secretly started irrigating the polyhouse with the drip system, and left the drip running and came home. By the time it was discovered two hours later, the water level in the tank had gone down by half a foot. Everyone honored her with the title of a real farmer. Once I placed a small plastic container under a dripper (the swollen lump-like area where a drop falls from the pipe) for 15 minutes. When measured that water, it was 50 ml. That much water was enough for a small plant. In this way water can be measured. Markings can be placed on every 50-50 ml in the container. The amount of water required for the plant can be met in this way. In a drip that operates due to the force of gravity, the speed of the drop falling at the end of the drip line decreases slightly. Although this difference is only slight. Similarly, if the ground is not completely level, more water collects at the down slope end. The crops are spread very much there, hence less fruits grow there, only greenery grows. The agriculture officer had already told us this, but we did not believe it. That's because the ground seemed completely flat to us. In fact, the slope should be measured with the water level and should be levelled if needed. Actually, the land can be leveled even after the polyhouse is built.

Later I also bought a special and electronic thermometer for the Polyhouse. This also helps a lot in the maintenance of the polyhouse. It runs day and night, and also records the maximum and minimum temperatures. I used to buy all such special items of Polyhouse from a special shop, which had every item of Polyhouse. The owner of that shop had also asked me to buy a special type of small stool (Patla), on which I could sit and do weeding in the polyhouse comfortably. But I didn't feel the need for

it. It was especially beneficial for old, weak people or those who have pain in their knees. Once I asked the shop owner whether the plastic sheets of the polyhouse do not cause pollution. He replied no. He said that it is made from waste product of petroleum. If they are not made into plastic sheets, then only they can cause pollution.

Now let us talk about planting crops in polyhouse. We made a bed about two inches high and two feet wide, which was the entire length of the polyhouse from one end to the other. All the small and big pebbles were taken out from the soil of the bed. Many pebbles came out, which was surprising to see. There was a huge pile outside. An experienced old man said that by keeping fire burning on that heap in the evening, it would turn into dust. Perhaps they get a shock of hot and cold from the fire and the cold weather outside, and they become weak and break down. But we did not have that much time and fuel. There were two drip pipes laid on a bed at a distance of about 1 foot apart from each other. A line of sowing used to come under the same drip pipes. In this way, there were two lines of sowing on one bed. There was an empty ground about 1 foot wide between the two beds, which was at a low level. It was useful for traveling here and there. The first thing we did was to plant peas because winter was just beginning. First the grains were soaked for 1-2 days and then expanded. Then the grains were sown at a distance of 3 inches. In this way, one grain would be just below the dripper drop, but the next grain would come between the two drippers (because there was a gap of half a foot between the dripper holes). In this way there was less humidity there. The soil of that polyhouse was less sandy. Therefore, there was good leakage of water in it. In very sandy soils, water filters down quickly at one place, so there is not enough time for percolation to occur. This leaves insufficient moisture in the ground between the drippers. Our second polyhouse had more sandy soil. There the percolation of water was sufficient for the plants, but was less for the growth of seeds. More moisture is required for the initial growth of seeds. Therefore, we irrigated the seed lines in the old way by connecting plastic pipes to the tank and using sprinklers. Even after germination, irrigation was done in the same manner for 8-10 days. In fact, the roots of small plants are very high in the ground. There is no seepage of drip water there. In fact, the top half to one inch of soil is completely dry, due to exposure to wind etc. Dig beneath it and you see abundant and beautiful moisture all around. Pea crop requires very little moisture. If excess water is given, the bush of green leaves spreads randomly, but very few pods are produced. Therefore, we used to run the drip only twice a week for 15-15 minutes. It requires large amount of water only at the time of flowering and pod development. It was hoeed once in between. Only a minimal amount of weeds had grown. The plants are delicate and vine-like. To support them, wooden pegs were driven in at 6-6 feet intervals and a rope was tied on them. Special string is available in the market. They provide work for many years because they do not rot due to lack of rain and sunlight. Then in the middle the plants were kept on those strings. I had mixed earthworm manure in sufficient quantity in the beginning itself, while making the bed. Therefore, there was no need to add fertilizer in between.

In a way, pea crop is organic. It does not demand pesticides and chemical fertilizers. Germs that produce urea from nitrogen in the air reside in its roots. Therefore this crop also increases the fertility of the soil. This can grow with scarcity of water. We sold peas worth about Rs 10,000 from both the polyhouses.

When summer came, uncle planted red and yellow capsicum in it. The disease had probably come from the nursery farm inside the Paneeri or saplings. Spraying of various pesticides stopped the disease to some extent, but the yield was greatly reduced. During hot summer days the shade net was put up. This not only reduced the heat but also reduced the amount of light available to the plants. Due to this the plants grew taller suddenly, but they became very thin. The leaves were also less and seemed withered. They were also supported with pegs and plastic string. Overall, considering the extra hard work, there was not enough income. I advised that instead of such vegetables, crops like radish, cucumber, coriander etc. should be planted. But uncle probably had the experience and passion for growing capsicum outside since ancient times, so he kept on planting it. Capsicum grown inside the polyhouse was giving less income than the same crop grown outside in the open. Experts say that once capsicum is affected by disease, capsicum should not be planted again in that field for three years. Sometimes the entire soil has to be treated with medicine. Many

times the soil itself has to be changed. This seemed a very expensive method. Once a plan was made to grow papaya in a polyhouse. But then I went far away from home for my work. So after that my uncle kept on planting crops as per his wish and enjoying as per his wish.

The security of the polyhouse also has to be taken care of very carefully. During wind storms, either keep it completely closed, or keep it completely open. If it is partially open, air can get in, which can create high pressure and tear the plastic cover. Actually, it is more beneficial to close it completely. Therefore, one should keep taking advance information about the weather from the weather department, and one should be alert if there is a possibility of a storm. During warning days, it should be closed completely. The second most serious damage to a polyhouse is due to strong sunlight. Sunlight's UV Radiation corrodes it. The third loss is caused by hot and cold (Frost). In the plains, the life of a polyhouse is at least 5 years. The sunlight is less intense in the mountains, so one can walk there for at least 10 years. Similarly, its door should also be locked, so that children or thieves do not enter it. In winter, it is also necessary to open the polyhouse for some time during the day, so that pure air can go in and impure air can come out, because plants also breathe like us.

Philosophical comparison of a polyhouse to a human body

Friends, self-actualization requires as many favorable conditions as are required to support life on any planet. Furthermore, self-realization by worldly means (with varying effectiveness) is not possible in a single life. This is a multi-life event. Yoga has scientifically imitated this natural phenomenon, and made it an artificial or a life phenomenon. It is in the same way that the natural favorable conditions responsible for rainfall are impossible to be created artificially, but building a polyhouse would have solved our objective of maintaining moisture at the desired level for plant life, without any dependence on rainfall. Is’nt it?

Dear friends, this water is the nectar that is needed to fully mature into a conscious life/soul. Patanjali's "Yogaschittavrittinirodha" (Complete suppression of the mind, both manifest and unmanifest, is Yoga) is also similar to this. That is the egolessness of worldly people. Same active principle with different curvature. Small worldly experiences are like sporadic and frequent rains. The reservoir for filtered rainwater is the subconscious mind. Without attempting to modify the clouds/sensors (as if this is impossible or foolish) light rain showers are collected through the roofs of the eyes and ears. The other senses are like a diverting valve, which turns off the supply to the filtration tank, and directs the dirty water directly to the higher brain centers, thereby continuously changing the humidity (sensation) there, thereby maintaining life unharmed. The visual and auditory centers of the brain are filtration tanks, where the bad stuff is filtered out. The last three limbs of Ashtanga yoga along with asanas and pranayama are a drip-irrigation system. "Spiritual Stories in Pure Sanskrit" is 100 hp water pump (most powerful), because with its power it transforms dull and impure mental sensations into agile and pure sensations, by opening the thinnest of drip channels/nerve channels, here even by opening the blocked ducts. The water/sensations are pumped out of the subconscious mind, and again any remaining filth is filtered out. The water flow of healthy and clean sensations is conveyed through microscopic nerve-like drip-pipes/nerve fibers to the deepest and highest brain center i.e. the point situated between the two eyebrows. Thus, a constant and consistent level of clean moisture (sensation) is achieved without fluctuations. It keeps that center alive and growing. During the maturity of the crop/consciousness, the water input is stopped (complete detachment) and all water/senses in the system are allowed to dissipate. This means, all the unexpressed/stored and latent sensations become expressed, and are thus consumed by the conscious being which is developing in the conditioned building/Sahasrara at the top. This is the final maturity of the crop / super-conscious state / Samadhi. After this, there is no water (available/expressed as well as stored) available, hence no sensation (both of being, and of non-being) remains, but only a blissful experience of maturity is felt. Soon, the final reaping of the harvest (complete detachment) takes place, and the same joyful bliss completely transforms into the fully conscious soul that does not need water/sensation. Unattached attitude and egolessness is the cover/protecting enclosure of POLYHOUSE made of plastic sheet. These are Yama, Niyama and Pratyahara parts. Divert valve is a misnomer for senses other than eyes and ears. These cause overflow of dirty water (unhealthy sensations), causing irregularities in humidity (sensations), due to

which the disease of ignorance spreads in the consciousness (soul). Their closure is the pratyahara part of yoga. Friends, probably because of these spiritual qualities of Polyhouse, I got many spiritual experiences from it.

part 3
rainwater harvesting
a spiritual-mixed-physical hobby

Book-part introduction

Friends, this is the time when India's NREGA scheme was at its peak. The budget was coming in full swing from the Centre. State governments were not able to spend it. There was already a shortage of skilled workers, which was further aggravated by the increasing demand for them. Therefore, many people from the poor class were not able to avail the benefits of the scheme. The money for the scheme was received only after the work was completed. A shelf was being made for a special purpose in the General House of the Panchayat. The Ward Member used to enter the name of each family in the shelf, so that if later on it wanted to get the sanctioned work done on the shelf, it would find its work already approved/sanctioned. Shelves were also being approved at a rapid pace. The author also built a rainwater harvesting tank under NREGA.

The author has described his own experience in this book/part of the book, highlighting the above practical points as felt by himself. It is hoped that the readers will find the book/part of the book interesting, and will also provide the necessary knowledge.

Friends, my house was on a small rocky hill. The soil there was also sandy. Due to this, rain water also ran away from it very quickly. The sunlight also seemed quite bright there. There were no means of irrigation there. Agriculture was entirely dependent on rain. In my village, amidst great difficulties, the elders had built a solid tank made of cement and a mud pond made of mud. Rainy ravine water was stored in them. There was minimal water in the ravine for a few winter months. They kept filling both the water sources slowly with that drop of water. A little water was available from it for vegetables, pea crops etc. In summer there was drought all around. There was no arrangement to store the water collected on the roof of the house due to the occasional rains in summer. In isolated and sporadic rains, there is not enough water to allow water to flow into the rainy ravines. From this the importance of rain water harvesting is understood. Due to lack of rain water harvesting, the villagers were not able to plant cash crops like tomato, capsicum etc. which were planted just before the rains. Only a few influential people were able to generate a small cash crop from the little old water that was stored in the tank. Others were able to grow cash crops only when the rains began, which greatly reduced crop productivity. Additionally, it became difficult to keep weeds under control. In fact, rainy season crops are planted 15-20 days before the onset of rains. Due to this, by the time it rains, the plants rise up to half to one feet above the ground. There are no weeds in it due to lack of water. When it rains, the crops drink the water and spread immediately. Weeds also start growing, but they remain buried under the spread of crops due to lack of sunlight and air, and are unable to rise up. If a crop is planted when it rains, the weeds spread above, and the plant remains below. The weed consumes all the food from the crop itself. Due to this the crop yield reduces significantly.

Rainfed maize is easy to plant 15-20 days or even a month before the onset of rains, as it requires very little water. Till the rainy season comes, even 1-2 rains will suffice. On the other hand, most cash crops are very delicate , and demand more water. The plant is uprooted from the nursery and planted dthen in the field, the seeds are not sown. Therefore, it needs constant irrigation to establish roots in a new place. One has to keep irrigating it twice in the morning and evening. A plant requires 100 ml to half a liter of water depending on its size. Therefore, about 500 liters of water is required per day for 1000 plants. If it is taken for 20 days, a total of 10 to 15 thousand liters of water is required. This means a medium-sized water tank needs to be full.
Friends, below my house, about 2 kilometers away and at a steep elevation of 200-300 meters, a perennial ravine also flowed. Once some villages, including mine, together tried to implement a government irrigation water project. All the paperwork was done. Electrical machines and water pipes were to be transported to the river in 1-2 days. Then the hostile people from far away villages who were deprived of benefits got information about this. They quickly passed a resolution against the plan in the Panchayat and presented it to their sympathetic minister. Those opponents had presented a strange kind of argument in the proposal. They wrote that there is less water in the ravine, and in summers it is negligible. Actually it was not so. A private irrigation project was also going on in the ravine below that planning site. In fact, those running private projects wanted that there should be no reduction in water in the ravine coming towards them. The private project owners had instigated the nearby villages against the said government scheme. Only for one or half months of summer there was so little water that work had to be done by sharing. But they did not accept that either. Their second argument was that the government irrigation scheme would have hampered the government drinking water scheme due to lack of water, because it was lower in the ravine. But the reality was that their own private irrigation project was also built on top of the government drinking water scheme, and it was built much later of it. They did not want to talk or hear about the damage caused by it. In the Gram Sabha, the opponents, under the influence of jealousy and selfishness, used to have bizarre and obstinate debates. Their main argument was that if water is available, everyone should get it, even if it is just one or two pots; And if you don't get it, then no one should get it. There was a strange stubbornness. We also assured them that we will gradually extend the scheme to the entire panchayat, through which water will be used jointly. When there was enough water in the ravine, even

the entire panchayat could survive. The budget at that time was small, and was approved for only one ward. The junior engineer had also conducted the survey and said that the water of the ravine was sufficient for only one ward, because he had conducted the survey in the scorching heat. Anyway, it was very hot that year. The ward situated closest to the ravine was proven to have the most rights, which was our ward. Anyway, there used to be gharats or water mills and water wells in the ravine in the name of the people of our ward, which are still recorded in the government documents. But the feelings of selfishness and jealousy of the opponents were so dominant that they were not ready to accept anything. Even our very close relatives had become our silent opponents in this matter. They had some drama in front of our face and something else behind our back. All of you brothers and sisters are aware of the vote bank politics of our country. No matter how good the work is, if it is causing loss of votes, then it is not allowed to happen. Similarly, in the greed for votes, bad deeds are also implemented. Well, the Minister could not turn down the proposal of the majority of the population, and it was rejected, thereby sacrificing our project for vote bank.

The cancellation of the project left a sad face for the local leaders who had worked so hard to bring it about. Even our well-wishing leaders and elders from far and wide used to scold the entire Panchayat in front of them, but the stubborn opposition people used to drink those scoldings happily considering them to be sugarcane juice.

Well, time passed. The people of our ward never had any feelings of revenge, and continued to participate in all social activities as before. Many times, internal matters related to each other would definitely be discussed. The stubbornness of the Panchayat was so strong that it remained for many years. Even later, whenever they received secret information about people in our ward waking up, they became alert and started opposing us behind our backs. Later, we ourselves started feeling that we did not need as much water as we were desiring. The practice of micro irrigation had started. Subsidized schemes of polyhouses and drip irrigation had started emerging on the government platform. For them, even rainwater harvesting could work. Gone are the days of flood irrigation, when an entire pond of water was poured into a field. The water from it would reach the underworld enriched with the power of manure and soil, and the crop would remain hungry and thirsty. The water which could have irrigated the fields of a hundred people, was usurped by a single influential person and wasted. They used to become religious for show. Later their entire attention was devoted to the renovation of a big temple. That was fine, but other development works should also not have been stopped. They did not care about the scriptures that water should be used jointly. That is why in olden times the sources of water like wells, stepwells etc. were collective. Therefore, we started feeling that if there was opposition to that irrigation scheme, it was a good thing. Whatever God does, he does it only for good. God sends problems only to elevate man. Although our irrigation scheme was small, micro irrigation could be done later also. But when our work could have been done through rain water harvesting, then why would we unnecessarily waste electrical machines and other equipment to raise the water from the ravine. People of our ward also started paying more attention to other options of earning instead of farming. After getting education, they started doing good jobs and business, due to which their income started becoming more than that of a well-known farmer. Seeing that, the pale faces of the aforesaid opponents were worth seeing.

By then the second phase of NREGA scheme was also being understood by the people. We did not even know about it in the first phase. It is possible that there was a provision of less budget in the first phase. In the second phase, the open budget was being distributed. There was a provision to provide financial assistance to every farmer family for building a rain harvesting tank and a field supporting stone wall. There was a provision of maximum financial assistance of Rs 70 thousand for each of the two. The TA (technical assistant) appointed under the NREGA scheme used to work in the Panchayat. He inspected each job, estimated its cost, and made payment accordingly. Some people were paid Rs 60 thousand and others Rs 50 thousand. The maximum amount of Rs 70 thousand was approved only for excellent work. The tank we made was of approximately 30 thousand liter capacity. An expenditure of Rs 1 lakh twenty thousand was incurred on it. For that we got Rs 70 thousand from NREGA, and we invested the remaining Rs 50 thousand from our own pocket. In fact, initially all the money for the work had to be spent from one's own pocket. Many times, some payment in the name

of wages (transferred to the bank accounts of job card holders) was received in installments in between during the work being done, if the papers were complete, but it was very less. Due to this, poor people had to face a lot of problems. They did not have his own money to start the work. Nor did anyone lend to them, seeing their poverty. Because no one wants to give a loan to someone who has little hope of returning the money. Banks also often do the same. Due to this it happened that only rich people were able to take most of the benefits of the scheme. What should have happened is that they should have got money from the scheme in the beginning itself, so that they could get the work done. Still, many poor people managed to arrange money. There was a lot of wastage of resources under the NREGA scheme. Many people were only engaged in collecting money for the scheme, they had no interest in work. They used to whitewash the outside for show and did not get their work thoroughly inspected. I don't think that makeshift structure worked. If it worked, it was expected to last only for 1-2 years. Much of the work was way off the mark. The water tanks used to leak from the very beginning. Out of 10 tanks, I saw only 2-3 tanks which met the quality standards and did not leak. The main reason for this was people trying to save cash for themselves from the budget set by the government. If 70 thousand rupees were to be received from the government, then accordingly it was necessary to build a tank with a capacity of about 35 thousand liters of water. Only then could the technical assistant provide an amount of Rs 70 thousand for him, because his accountability was also fixed. The simple thing was that to make a quality tank of such capacity, at least Rs 1 lakh 20 thousand was required. We ourselves had built a tank of this size for this amount, as I told earlier also. Now most of the people, far from investing their money, were trying to save some money for themselves out of the Rs 70 thousand payable by the government. They were in favor of investing around Rs 50-60 thousand, and in favor of saving 10-20 thousand rupees for themselves. Now think for yourself that if a tank which costs Rs 1 lakh 20 thousand is made for Rs 50-60 thousand, then where can the quality come from. Therefore, they used inferior materials, used less than the proper proportion of cement, used poor construction techniques, employed unskilled and cheap labor, and tried to control the technical assistants. Many leader type people even got high recommendations. From outside, the tank looked full to the technical assistant, but he could not go deep into the interior. He was responsible for supervising dozens of similar tasks at the same time. Many times, some scammers were also caught, due to which he would reduce the amount payable to them. But the quality that is gone is gone. The wastage of resources would have already happened by then. This proves how important the feeling of patriotism/love of society is for the development of the country. The second main reason for the poor quality of work, as I mentioned earlier, was the non-availability of government funds at the beginning of the work. Due to this, people had to manage by borrowing small amounts of money from here and there. This also resulted in reduction in quality. The third reason was that the budget for the work was kept low. Quality work could not be done in that limited budget. This was impossible in the mountains, because the cost of manufacturing goods in the mountains is higher than in the plains. Most of the additional expenditure comes in the form of cost of transportation of goods to remote areas. Of course, there would have been provision for only a few works in the plan, but they should have been of quality.

Friends, water problem is the fundamental problem of the world today. Water plays a special role in running every family. The family seems incomplete without him. Water is needed for every work. Even for hygienic defecation, plenty of water is required. We never even thought about rainwater harvesting for that. It was not that there was financial crisis in our family. We got many works requiring money done, but we never paid attention to rain water harvesting. We never understood its importance. We were completely dependent on the government for water. With the help of the leaders, the elders had got a small lifted drinking water project installed. Everyone used to do their work with that. There was not enough water, so people often complained. Very little water was released during summer. During heavy rains, the machines were stopped due to the problem of silt in the water of the ravine. Many times the machines would break down. Sometimes the pipes would break. A small tank was built on top of one of the highest hills, to which water was supplied by an electric pump from a ravine at a distance of about 500 meters of steep descent. From that tank, water reached every village through gravity pipes. Earlier there used to be only one tap in a village. Later, every family started getting

private water connection for itself. This increased wastage of water, due to which water shortage became more acute. Neighboring panchayats also kept an eye on the water of our small scheme. They also used their leadership to try and get that water taken to their place. Then only a nominal amount of water would be left for us. Surprisingly, those nearby panchayats did not fall in the catchment area of our ravine. This means that the rain water in those panchayats did not come to our ravine, but went to another ravine. They could get water separately from their own well. Anyway they already had enough of their own water. They even irrigated their fields. Still, we don't know what the politics of our country will do when. Despite all this, the people of our Panchayat had not built even a single rain water storage tank in their courtyard. They considered it a wasteful expenditure of money. I would like to praise the government scheme in this matter. It is meant for some particularly important work, which people have put aside. When people understand the importance of the work done by that scheme, then they themselves start doing those works with passion and at their own expense. Then there is no need for a government scheme, because its purpose has been fulfilled.

Friends, I got two tanks built under NREGA scheme, one in my name and one in my brother's name. Both of us had separate ration cards, hence our families were considered separate. That scheme had a provision for construction of only one rainwater collection tank for a family.

One tank was of approximately 30-35 thousand litres, as I have mentioned earlier also. It was built in the courtyard just outside the door of our house. Actually, that place in the courtyard was between two different families. It was filled with soil and grass. The entire area on both sides was paved. Even the children used to look like dusted while playing there. That place seemed to me the best for tank construction. That place was also solid and rocky, hence the tank built there never leaked. Some other members of the family suggested building a tank on a sloping site below it. They said that animals could also be tied on the roof of the tank built on it. The third group suggested making a tank by placing stones in the standing ditch. There was a lot of discussion. I enumerated many benefits of making a tank in the courtyard of the house. It was also told that the space being wasted between the two families will be properly utilized. There was good sunlight in winter, and cool and sweet breeze blew there in summer. This was because the place was completely open (unobstructed) on two sides, and half open on the third side. Another family had a house on half of it. The open, bright and green view of the mountains and beyond that was visible from there was a different beauty of that place. I had to speak a lot to make everyone understand. Ultimately everyone accepted my advice happily and without hesitation. This is the beauty of democracy. There was a rubber plant tree in the corner of that courtyard, which is still there. It still looks very beautiful in the corner of the courtyard. When the courtyard was dug down from surface, the roots of that god tree were everywhere. Those roots, forming a network, were limited only to the extent where there was lose soil. Not a single root was found in the rocky part below. As the depth of the rocky part was increasing, its hardness was also increasing. It had become difficult even to extract edible soil with one blow of Jhabbal means digging steel rod. We had to employ Gorkha labor to dig it. Gorkha is a well-known and brave Nepali community. 4-5 Gorkhas used to tinker with tools throughout the day. I felt tired even looking at them. It did not seem that the depth of the tank would reach six and a half feet, but they did it. However, initially we employed local people who also had NREGA job cards. But within a few days they threw up their hands and ran away. Then the Gorkha people had to pay daily wages by withdrawing money from the bank account of the job card holder. The job card holder's daily attendance mustrol register had to be submitted to the Panchayat every month. There was also a fear that if someone came to inspect the work, what would be the answer. For this, 2-3 job card holders also had to be kept at work, so that they could be shown. My two aunts and one uncle used to do this work. They used to work comfortably. They had job cards. This problem was occurring everywhere. Job card holders used to go to the city to earn good wages. There were very few daily wages in NREGA. It was enough for a state like Bihar, but it was less for a more developed state like Himachal or Punjab. However, later it was increased a little, still that was insufficient. Many thug type people providing job cards for the work did not give money from their account to the tank owner. Many used to deduct commission. However, this rarely happened in villages' brother-bond relationships. It was ensured in the mnrega scheme to provide employment for 150 days of the year to the job card holder. The remaining 50 days of many

people were collected, 40 of some, 10 days of some and so on to fulfil the job card days' requirement for the work. In this way, payment was made only after completing the number of job card days required for a particular size of tank. We have even traveled 10 kilometers in the car with our friends to collect job card days. Every month we had to go there to get muster roll signed. It was very difficult to convince many people. Many people were afraid. Many people used to give jobcard-days with the assurance that whenever they needed any construction work, we would give them our jobcard-days.

Friends, the land which belongs to the courtyard etc. outside the house comes in a special common account (Abadi Deh) in the land records. Khata Mushtarka is also an account of shared land, but it covers the fields and barns away from the house and courtyard. That abadi deh land is not owned by any particular family. It is shared by all the family members. The one whose house is closest to it is considered its owner. If there is scope for sharing, it can also be shared among themselves. Therefore the Patwari did not go to the spot to investigate. He made the deed of the courtyard land in the name of my family in the office itself. The neighboring family may also object when the work starts. One of our neighbors could not do this even if he wanted to, because there was no possibility of dividing that small land, and his house was a little further away. He built his house later. If they wanted, they could have built their house a little further away, leaving our courtyard, because they had vast land all around. Later we never stopped them from taking out water from our tank. This increases mutual trust and cooperation in the society.

Friends, high quality raw materials were used to manufacture the tank. Sand from the hill mines was brought in a tipper, which was available nearby. It is golden and beautiful to look at. There is no soil in it. However, river sand can also be used, but it should be washed, otherwise it becomes weak due to the presence of soil in it. The stone was also sourced from the best hill quarries. Those were at a greater distance, but not much. their stone was very strong and porous, in which cement had very good grip. They were transported on tippers by road for 10-12 kilometers. In total there must have been around 4-5 tippers loaded of stones used. They were carried by mules on the 1 kilometer route from the road to the house. Due to mules the freight charges increased. They were big and small rough stones. Hewn and square stones are very expensive. Mostly they are used by rich people to build luxurious and decorative houses. Tank construction work had already started in the pit made for the tank. Gatka was first poured for floor construction. Gatka is called small stones (about the size of a closed fist), which are spread on the ground in a layer of about half a foot deep. We found them in abundance in the nearby fields. There should not be too much fragile stone for that also. Concrete mixture is made to pour over them. For this, cement, sand and gravel (cobbles/rough pieces of stone of approximately marble size) are mixed together with water in the ratio of approximately 1:4:8 respectively. The better these are mixed together, and the less water is used, the greater will be the strength of the concrete. However, there should be enough water so that it can be applied at the marked place and pressed well. Now it has been proven through scientific experiments that the more water is added than required, the more its strength will reduce. When excess water dries, the cement structure remains empty/poppy from inside. Thus, even without proper impaction the cement structure remains porous from within. Most of the masons do not know this basic thing. They make thin mounds of concrete so that they do not have to move the karandi (a metal plate with a handle used for mixing and pressing concrete) with their hands to set it.

Friends, we prepared the best quality concrete mix, and set it by ramming it all around in the middle of the pit. Remember, we kept the work of paving that floor for the end. We also laid Gatka at the same time, at the end of tank construction. During the masonry of the wall of the tank, large stones have to be thrown from a height into the pit, due to which micro cracks are formed in the cement-paved floor. This increases the possibility of the tank leaking. Most people make the floor concrete in the beginning. Maybe that's why people's tanks were leaking. We created a two and a quarter foot blank concrete slab on the margin around the square shaped raw floor. The masonry of a wall of about 2 feet width was started on it. Out of this, about one and a half feet of stone masonry was done. The inner half foot was covered with a single brick wall. There was a small lane (about 3 inches wide) between the brick and stone wall, in which the concrete mixture was filled by ramming it with Karandi. This made the tank leak-proof. Sometimes stone leaves the cement with time, but brick never leaves

it. The brick itself breaks, but does not leave the cement. Of course, brick also corrodes (weakens, becomes brittle and falls off) in water, but it lasts for about 20-25 years. If this happens, the old brick can be removed and a new brick can be installed in the same manner. One of the functions of the sandwiched concrete inserted in the middle was that if the roots of any tree etc. started entering through the crack between the stones, then the concrete layer would not allow it to enter inside, because in such a small gap it cannot create a crack. Anyway, concrete has great strength. The proportion of cement in it was also kept slightly higher. We applied a similar method to our 30 year old stone tank. It was leaking from an unknown place. We had made small depressions (about average size of half by half centimeter) on its entire inner wall with an iron hammer (a nail-like tool used to make small depressions in stone), so that the concrete could stick to them. Then we laid single brick masonry on the inside in the same way, and filled the thin gap between the two walls with concrete. Due to this, water leakage stopped completely and the tank became like new. That tank was of approximately 1 lakh liter capacity, due to which it costed Rs 50 thousand to do so. That money was received from the Panchayat under some government scheme, with great difficulty, and after a lot of insistence by our uncle. 1-2 ignorant and jealous people had even expressed their objection to spending so much money for repairs. But if the old tank did the work of a new tank which costed Rs 4 lakh only with a cost of Rs 50 thousand, then it was a profit. The resources that were saved are different. This is around 2014-15. All the works mentioned in this book were done almost simultaneously. I had also told the same method to a cattle rearer brother when I had gone to his house for his cow-service work. His tank was leaking, and he was going to tear it down and rebuild it. When I narrated my experience to him, he was delighted and thanked me profusely for saving him from the expense of having his tank dismantled. Well, after enclosing the 2-foot concrete pavement at base of our tank for erecting up its wall, we left the extra space of two and half inches covered by the concrete slab (the total width was 2.25 feet). That's so that the concrete of the floor can be poured over it later. Due to the weight of that concrete, the floor would stick completely to that concrete plank, and become leak-proof. Many people don't do this. This creates a delicate joint at the corner between the wall and the floor. Even the slightest movement in the tank can cause that joint to leak at any time. The masonry of the wall was being done in great order. First a stone wall (about 1 foot high) was being built, then an equal brick wall was being built. If the brick wall was first built, it could be broken by falling crooked stones. Then concrete was being filled between the two.

Almost the entire tank had gone underground. Only half of the earthen wall on one tank width side, and the top wall, was missing. That half wall open space was actually acting as a window from where the debris from the tank digging was taken out. A lot of debris came out. It was rocky. It was not suitable for farming. The debris buried in the soil does not appear much because it is tightly packed under high pressure. When taken out, it opens and spreads a lot. Fortunately, below that window there was a steep slope towards the ravine, which was on our own land. It was in the possession of a villager, that had escaped from him some time ago, while getting the land marked by the Patwari. Therefore, we used to take the debris through a narrow passage in the partially open earthen wall to 30 feet away from the tank site inside a single wheeled cart and drop the debris towards the ditch, which went straight towards the ravine. We also built a small stone rampart at an appropriate down point in the ditch, so that the debris would stop there, and would not destroy much of the land, and also would not block the ravine. Sometimes it becomes difficult to dump the debris. Sometimes its cost is even more than the cost of tank construction. After the tank was built, we also filled that open wall window passage with the debris from the tank. Due to this the tank became completely underground. One thing worth noting is that the last upper one and a half to two feet wall of the tank can also be made thin, if there is a shortage of material or space etc., because the water pressure is less near the surface. We had to do the same with one wall due to space constraints. The width of the wall there reached about 1 foot.

Friends, I remembered that I had also worked in the watershed project right after coming to my village after completing my graduation. Our Panchayat was also involved in that project. Check dams were being built there. I used to use pickaxe and jhabbal (earth digging tools) with less educated youth from nearby villages. People were surprised at how enthusiastically a graduate young man was working

hard for water conservation. Ponds were being dug there, so that the rain water would collect and seep into it, and increase the water level of the ground. Similarly, walls were built in the middle of different ravines, which are called check dams. Those walls (stone ramparts) used to hold the water, due to which a raw pond was formed there. Water would also seep into the ground, causing the underground water level to rise. I built 3-4 check dams with the people and created a big pond. This was possible only through patriotism and passion for water conservation. However, we were also getting minimum daily wages from that government project. Every month we used to sign Muster roll and then payment was made. Then mutual cooperation among people started decreasing. Some very ambitious and negative type of people started accusing each other of being leaders and grabbing money. Special attention was also not paid to the quality of work. Due to this the plan was limited to that only. However, after some time, when its prescribed tenure ended, the scheme itself stopped. Our Panchayat got its work started near the end of its tenure. Of course, many years later, the Ward Panch of our ward took over the work of building that check dam under the NREGA scheme. There was some benefit from it, but not fully visible. Lack of quality and understanding was visible in those works also. Due to this people started opposing him. He was building a check dam on the river side away from people's farming areas. Perhaps there was good availability of stones in the ground on that side. He was saying that this would increase the water level in the river, and the downstream areas would benefit. He was right, but people had objection as to why water was provided only to other areas instead of their own.

Well, the construction of that underground tank was going on in full swing and there was prosperity all around. The soil around such an underground tank provides good support. Because in some places the soil of the walls of the raw pit is less uprooted, in others it is more; Therefore, we packed well with gravel between the wall of the tank and the wall of the pit, so that no gap remains empty. We made this tank back support solid by pouring concrete mixture into it. This also provided good support to the surrounding land for the tank. In an underground tank, a single stone wall is sufficient. The above ground tank has to be provided with a double stone wall as there is no pit wall which can pack the gatkas (stone pieces). Many people also install double stone wall in underground tanks. That is so that if ever the land around it has to be dug up to build a tank as a house, the wall can remain intact. Otherwise, while digging, small stones keep coming out, due to which the wall disappears. Similarly, many people do not lay bare concrete floor in their courtyard, but instead lay RCC floor by laying rebar along with the concrete. After that, one or two pillars are buried in each of the four corners. Then if they ever need to build a tank house in future, they can easily build it by digging the soil below it. That floor then also starts working as a linter/rcc roof.

Friends, the wall of the tank was complete. Then the day came to put the linter means RCC roof in Hindi slang. That required shattering of wood. The mechanic asked to cut two small trees. We suffered environmental damage because many trees were sacrificed for one use. So we collected shatterings from here and there. Took some shattering. In our village there was a custom of organizing work-camp to put the linter. In this, people from the surrounding areas would gather and perform Shramdaan or volunteer labour, and in the evening, good and powerful dishes would be prepared for everyone. But that practice was beginning to decline. Therefore only 4-5 powerful members of our family gathered. It takes a lot of strength that day. Concrete has to be carried alone in pans or on the surface of empty sacks held by two men. Where concrete is mixed, it has to be picked up and delivered to the mechanic. 4-5 laborers (Nepali Gorkha) were already available with us. I got the entire concrete mixture made in front of me. Water was not allowed to be added more than required. However, many people were also upset with my obstruction. I would accept that anyway in exchange for higher quality. One shortcoming of the mechanic was that he did not fix the rebar web above the surface of shuttering wooden planks. This is done by placing pieces of stone under them at some places. Due to this the rebar remained stuck to the planks. The concrete layer remained at the top, and the rebar mesh remained at the bottom. For complete strength the rebar mesh should reach the middle of the concrete bed. The second drawback was that plastic sheets were laid at many places to prevent the cement water from seeping down. Perhaps there was excess water in the mixture at many places. Later there was a lot of difficulty in removing that sheet. It could not be

removed from many places. This caused a lot of difficulty in sticking the plaster on the lower surface of the roof of the tank. Such small deficiencies are found at most places, due to which the quality deteriorates greatly. One such drawback is that of curing. Irrigation of freshly set concrete with water for 2-3 weeks is called curing. Curing is ignored everywhere. Most of the illiterate working class people do not understand its importance, but most of the educated people also show great carelessness in it. The weakness in most cement structures is not due to the quality or quantity of the material, but due to lack of curing. Such negligence is seen more in government departments. By curing the newly prepared cement structure, 25% strength is obtained in the first three days, 50% in the first week, 75% in the second week, and 90% in the third week. After that, the remaining strength of 10% is obtained in the last fourth week and gradually for several. 100% strength is achieved in five years. Once I had asked a senior officer of the Public Works Department for an answer on this matter of negligence, he too had avoided it by saying that only one week of curing is sufficient, after that it would keep happening on its own. To achieve full strength, curing should be done for three weeks. But even if two weeks are given, the work can be done. The situation here is such that in most of the cases, curing is not done even for a week. Which is very important. Lack of curing is also a major reason for the wastage of our country's resources. I don't see anyone curing a cement structure after construction, except in rare cases. Everyone keeps putting the responsibility of curing on each other and keeps shirking their responsibility. To avoid the hassle of curing, it is better to get the construction work done during the rainy season. Curing should be done from the beginning, because even once the cement dries, its strength does not return. I wish there could be separate department for curing.

Friends, I maintained humidity on all structures for 4 full weeks after tank-building. It was extremely hot days. So I used to cover them with wet jute sacks, and on top of that I covered them with cheap polythene sheets. There was a shortage of water, otherwise we would make two small compartments on the lantern, fill them with water, and leave them open without covering them. I even used to hang wet jute sacks on the walls of the tank, so that there would be constant moisture on them. This was the reason that it has been almost 7-8 years since the tank was built, but till now no information about leakage has been found in it. I had to do all such small tasks myself, because when it came to quality, everyone started peeping with wide eyes. The repairmen had even avoided plastering the lower surface of the linter. He said that the water level in the tank will be kept low, so that the rods of the linter will not rust. But they were not believing that even the steam of water would definitely get the rebar wet. Perhaps they did not want to work in the cramped conditions inside the tank. Then the work was done by paying almost double the money to a working mechanic. Then the tank was completed, seeing which the soul became happy. Without plastering the surface, insects would have made their home in the holes of its ceiling underneath. After the linter was laid, we used to walk comfortably on it for 3-4 days, because at that time it is raw. It should not be irrigated for the first 12 hours, otherwise I noticed that its upper surface comes off like a crust, at many places. Well, after 1 month the shattering of Lanter was opened. There was a square hole of about 2 feet by 2 feet in size at one corner. That was to go in and out for cleaning and to get the shattering out of the tank. We had tied the iron frame of its lid with reeds in the beginning itself. Many holdfasts (like iron rods) were welded all around it in the right direction. With this it held the bar tightly. When the concrete of the linter was laid, the frame became permanent. For the lid, we made a frame of the same size and shape, to which many iron rods were welded from top to bottom. After placing it on a plastic sheet, I poured concrete (more part of cement), and it became the RCC cover. A slight dome shape was made on the upper side, so that there is no difficulty in walking on it, there is no tripping, and the position of the lid is also clearly visible. There is no latch on it to open it, otherwise mischievous people and children keep opening it again and again. This also increases the possibility of an accident. It is also very heavy due to it being made of concrete, due to which even children cannot lift it. Whenever there was a need to open it in rare cases, we used to open it by inserting a pickaxe (digging tool) into its frame. Similarly, we placed a nearly two inch hole at one corner of the tank, through which the 2-inch pipe coming from the rainwater harvesting chamber could enter. We also kept a 1 inch hole in the third corner, so that the thin black pipe coming from the water department tap could enter through it. Due to this, excess water was stored. An iron plate was brought from the welder, which had a nail hole in the middle. A wooden

gutkha or cylindrical block was attached to it with a nail. The lid of that hole was made of it. My little son would come there crawling on his knees, take it out and inspect it deeply, and then he would throw it away. Then he would put his finger in that hole and keep playing. Gradually it broke and disappeared. Then the old mother of the house would put a piece of cloth inside it. A half inch sized hole was placed on the side of the ravine for overflow. It was just below the lantir. However, we never allowed so much water to overflow. Grandmother Amma would tie a netted cloth in it, so that creatures like snakes etc. would not enter inside. By the way, the steam formed in the summer also keeps coming out through those holes, due to which the pressure inside the tank does not increase. One reason for tank leaking may be pressurized steam. The main reason appears water falling from a height. Many times, the vibration of falling water becomes similar to the vibration generated in the tank and spreads over it. This is called resonance. This can cause the tank to vibrate rapidly, causing micro cracks and leaks. Therefore, it is better if the water release pipe is near the floor, so that it is always immersed in water. Similarly, similar tremors can be caused by people swimming in the tank. When a man jumps into a water tank, there is a lot of pressure on the tank. The problem with swimming arises in open tanks, because people swim only in open tanks. Although the mechanic used to say that nothing like this happens, but safety lies in caution. The open tank also has to be covered, so that no one enters it accidentally. Children and dogs are special victims. We had fenced an open tank with crate wire. It cost around Rs 10-20 thousand. The size of the tank was approximately 24 feet by 18 feet. There was a wire net about 3 feet high. Well, even two and a half feet would have worked. Many times we ourselves had taken out live dogs that had entered there. And dogs are special hunters.

Friends, while making that tank, a 1 to 1.5 inch thick pipe was fixed on its floor outside, towards the ravine. There was a slight slope on all sides up to that hole, due to which water would collect there while cleaning. Almost 7-8 years have passed since we did not need cleaning or that pipe. Friends, I remembered that after the final cement-finishing of the inner surface of the tank, we had filled it with water up to one foot level. That water was open and dirty. We lifted it from an open tank with Tulu pump, which was at a low level. This makes it so that there is no temperature fluctuation as the curing takes place. The temperature remains the same day and night. Due to this, micro cracks formed due to hot and cold do not occur, hence leakage does not occur. Anyway the tank should never remain empty. There should always be at least 1-2 feet of water in it. That is why we had fixed the half-inch water filling pipe coming out of the tank in the wall of the tank at the level of two and a half feet of the tank. Well, it would have been better if it had been at 2 feet. For the aforesaid 1 or 1.5 inch drainage pipe, we took the external gate valve of the company and of good brass. It came for around Rs 500. Country valves often go bad. Pipes should be thoroughly checked for leakage. If a pipe is found to be leaking after being buried in soil, it will require a lot of effort to replace it. We found out later that our pipe was leaking. But fortunately it was leaking out of the part buried in the soil. The entire pipe was cut from the leaking part up to the tap and a new pipe was attached to the pipe coming from the tank. Later, when the summer season passed and the rains started, we drained the dirty water from that tank through the drainage pipe into the same old tank from which we had raised the water. For this, we made a small cement-brick chamber (1 foot by 1 foot by 1 foot) encircling the gate valve of the drainage pipe, which also had a hole slightly above the ground level for the drainage pipe. That's why it was slightly above the floor, so that any thick object could settle down and do not enter the pipe and block it. We had stuck two iron nails in the middle of the hole of the chamber. There was no possibility of any thick object getting stuck in the pipe. Even children could have mischievously stuck balls etc. in it. But the leaves that came with the water started getting stuck in those nails, due to which the water stopped moving forward. I would take out those leaves while getting wet in the pouring rain, so that the standing water could flow into the tank. So we removed one nail, leaving the hole divided into only two equal parts. There was no problem with that. The size of the hole was approximately two inches according to the drainage plastic pipe going away from the chamber. We did this with all the chambers.

Friends, now it was the turn to collect roof water in the tank built in the courtyard. Our house had a lentar or lentir or RCC roof whatever called in different languages and slangs. Its entire area will be approximately 50 square meters. We marked the corners where rain water collected. We saw this in the middle of the rain. However, we identified two corners where approximately 80% of the roof water was collected. The remaining 20% water went here and there. We had to capture it later. At those two marked corners we made holes in the linter. The hole was about 2 inches round, into which a commonly available 2-inch plastic roof water drainage pipe would fit. That pipe came straight down, touching the entire corner of the wall, and ended in a chamber on the ground level. A 2-inch piece of plastic pipe would be fitted through the outlet hole of that chamber, which would end directly inside the tank. We made the mistake of not leaving a hole in the wall of the tank at the time of masonry under the linter. If that were the case, the entire pipe could have been underground. Therefore, we later had to make a hole from above in the corner of the tank's roof, due to which part of the pipe sticking out there looked strange. Well, then it became a habit. We had created a two-way system. There was another hole in the same chamber, through which the underground pipe going to the above mentioned dirty water tank located at the bottom was connected. We used to keep that hole open, so that all the water would go down. We would let it rain for a while, so that the dirt from the linter (dust, bird droppings, leaves, etc.) would flow away into the dirty water tank. Then we used to close that hole. Due to this, the water in the chamber would rise up and go to the clean water tank in the courtyard through the short pipe fitted in the hole at the top as told above. By the way, we also used to add bleaching powder in the tank at times. Well, mostly we relied on lime only. Lime is also safe for health, and by killing all the germs it also settles down the scum in the water. For a filled tank of thirty to thirty five thousand cubic feet, about half a kilo of lime is sufficient. We used to dissolve it outside in a bucket of water and pour that bucket into the tank. It is said that by reacting with the dirt of unfiltered water, bleaching powder forms cancer-causing elements, which can even enter our body through vapours while breathing. Well, a 2 inch plastic pipe also passed outside the chamber of the tank in that courtyard. It came from a dirty water chamber in the corner of the roof about 20 feet away. It went straight to the dirty water tank. We also connected it to the lower hole of the chamber with a T-joint. In this way, the water from both the chambers was carried by gravity to the dirty water tank through a single pipe.

Friends, similarly water used to collect in another chamber from the sheeted roof of my neighbor uncle at about 40 feet distance away at lower side. The common dirty water pipe mentioned above used to open into this chamber. A single pipe led from that chamber to the dirty water tank. That pipe was the longest (about 30 meters long). Both the underground pipes mentioned above were short in length, which were pieces of pipe of about 5-10 meters. In this way, dirty water was collected from two chambers through small pipes and went to the third collective chamber, from where the dirty water from all three roofs passed through a single long pipe and reached the dirty water tank. It was a very beautiful system, and everyone kept praising it. By the way, I too was able to make it only with the loving support of my family and neighbours. In this way we used to try to collect every single drop of rain water. This is the main objective of rainwater harvesting.

Friends, in this way all the dirty rain water and additionally available clean water got collected in the above mentioned dirty water tank at that low level. From there I myself connected plastic pipes to supply water to the fields at lower level. It is very easy to make the desired fitting of plastic pipe. I laid and fitted plastic pipes from that tank to both the polyhouses myself. The end of the pipe that was in the tank was heated and wires were inserted into it across its width, due to which a network of wires was formed over its aperture. A thin net was tied over it. Due to this, the pipe of the tank was not blocked due to dirt. Anyway we kept the pipe at least half to a foot above the floor of the tank, so that it would not draw silt. The water was sucked automatically by siphoning/self-suction. Where a joint had to be made in a plastic pipe, an iron pipe of appropriate thickness was fitted inside it. Additional fittings like fixing taps etc. were done on top of that iron pipe piece. That 4 to 6 inches long gi pipe piece of matching thickness was inserted inside the little lesser width plastic pipe by heating it to little expand and hold it firmly while cooled. I even used a hose clamp to hold them together to make them

further leakproof. The entire pipe was buried in soil, so that it would not get spoiled by sunlight and heat and cold shock.

Friends, now due to the construction of various rainwater harvesting tanks, moisture filled with beauty, faith, determination and spirit of mutual cooperation had spread all around in our area. People were knowingly or unknowingly taking inspiration from that system. Our courtyard tank was judged to be the best tank of that government rainwater harvesting scheme. Our Panchayat also got an honor/reward for that. The previously mentioned dryness of our village was destroyed. Our village had become prosperous and balanced. Stiffness had also gone away from the minds of the village people to a great extent. Everyone became rich with a charming, simple, soft and sweet personality. Some or the other green vegetables were available to eat throughout the year. Among them, fenugreek, coriander, radish, peas, mustard, cucumber, pumpkin, gourd, capsicum, tomato etc. were prominent.

Similarly, as I told earlier also, under NREGA, another tank of smaller size (about 20-25 thousand litres) was built at a distance of 100 meters downside from the tank in the courtyard of the house. As I mentioned earlier (in the vermicompost section) it was used to collect rain water flowing down the grassy ridge slope. Due to this, its water was used for irrigation in the nearby fields and in the vermicompost unit built nearby. But the adjacent field was only a little lower than that. Therefore, when more than half the tank was empty, there was some difficulty in water reaching there due to gravity. While digging the pit for that tank, we had forgotten to fit an outlet pipe, so the pipe had to be inserted inside the tank over the surface water, and the water had to be sucked by gravity. However, we always kept the pipe submerged in the tank, and also tied the other end of the pipe high in the tree (to the level or little more of the height of the end of the part of the pipe inside the tank). The rest of the pipe was lying in the field. Due to this, when the end of the pipe was lowered from the tree to the field, the water would automatically flow, because there was already water in the pipe, which would flow by gravity and act as suction. We can also fit gate valve or tape to the lower end of the pipe. Friends, from it we ate many vegetables that grow in winter, like fenugreek, coriander, spinach, mustard, soya, onion-garlic leaves etc. In fact they require very little irrigation. Firstly, their roots are very high in the soil. Second, there is minimal evaporation of ground water in winter, so irrigation moisture remains for a long time. The water requirement of these crops is also nominal. Evening was the time for irrigation. This gave time to the moisture to seep into the roots throughout the night, and it would not evaporate in the sun. By placing our thumb on the end of the water pipe, we would stand and scatter a light spray of water all around, due to which the surface of the ground would appear wet, but the water would not seep down. The same moisture reached the roots of the plants by morning, which was sufficient. We learned this method from an older worker working in our house. To protect those vegetables from animals like rabbits, peacocks etc., we had tied a 3 feet high net sheet (white in colour, the same one used in polyhouses) to pegs around the field like a wall. Similarly, the tank was slightly (1-2 feet) lower than the vermicompost unit. Due to this, water had to be carried with a bucket after walking 10-15 steps to the unit. That tank was almost underground. Only the extra part of its 2 feet height was out of the ground. Due to this, the vermicompost on top had reached the level of the top of the wall of the unit. Only a small part of the tank can be safely kept without potential leakage outside the ground, because there is very little water pressure above. It is said that the underground tank should be made of stone only. An above ground tank requires more strength, hence that tank should be of RCC. But it is said that if an RCC tank gets leaked/cracked, it cannot be repaired like a stone wall tank. When water became available, we planted many bamboo and pomegranate plants, which have grown up quite a bit today. I really enjoy pruning pomegranate branches. It is done in the winter months. With it the pomegranate plants get decorated like a bride. In winter, put a 2 feet branch of it in the ground and keep the soil moist, then it will take root and become a new pomegranate plant.

Like the courtyard tank mentioned above, the construction of that tank also happened smoothly with fun, happiness and favorable circumstances. However, the bricks that were ordered for it seemed a bit brittle. The driver of the vehicle was not told beforehand to bring it after checking. Well, there has been no problem with the tank so far. While excavating for it, many stones were found, which were used in the masonry of its walls. Therefore, we had to order less stones from outside (only two tippers/cargo vehicle). We had placed an iron pipe in the start as drainage or outlet pipe. But it fell

short, and when the debris of the tank fell on it, it got buried under the debris. We tried very hard to find it, but it could not be found. There was a fear that the tank would crack due to digging, but it was saved. Had to do a lot of unnecessary hard work. We started thinking that it would be better not to install drainage pipes at all. The hole of the drainage pipe inside the tank had to be closed with poured concrete. Luckily there was no leakage there.

Freshly poured concrete grows like a child. Its molecules drink water and keep extending their arms and legs around themselves, and keep holding each other tightly. Due to this it becomes stronger day by day. The philosophy of cement science is also as alive as the philosophy of physiology. That is why there is a unique pleasure in cement work. Establishing the structure of cement is like establishing the structure of a human body. In fact, cement was discovered for the construction of water structures. That is because it is the only, cheap substance, which does not dissolve in water, giving it complete strength. It is a different matter that nowadays it is being used in constructing huge buildings, due to which environmental pollution is increasing. Nowadays, people are also using it to build their ordinary houses. However, houses made of it are not comfortable to live in. To make them comfortable, heavy electricity has to be used. Due to this, pollution has increased manifold. Making cement requires a lot of energy, which is exploited at the expense of the environment.

Friends, many negative things were also spread in the surrounding area about our second tank. It was heard that people keep saying behind their back that two tanks were given to one family, whereas many families did not get even a single tank. Some people also said that being government employees, they were taking the scheme, but they did not want to understand that everyone had a democratic right on that scheme. Striving peacefully for your rights is a sign of awareness. However, one tank was in my name, and one in my brother's name. Both had two separate ration cards. Although at that time NREGA tanks were being distributed openly, but if people do not try themselves, they will not be built automatically. The person who spread that news was a middle-aged man from our village. They were once separated from our own family. The tank in his name was not put on the shelf for sanction by the ward member. Because of that he had also troubled the ward member a lot. Well, there are one or two people of that type in most villages. That's why they were taking out their anger on that extra tank of ours. In fact, he himself had refused to put the small tank on the shelf. He had put the demand for a big and mass tank on the shelf, and that sanction was also done. But when they later came to know that no objection certificate signed by all the villagers had to be submitted, they refused to make it. Actually everyone had to sign. But he himself could not muster the courage to go to the villagers, because they had created obstacles in almost all the works of the village. Also, they were afraid that if everyone signed, they would also be able to fill water from his tank someday, because they would be authorized. Although everyone had their own tanks, but no land lover would even think of sharing the structure built on his precious land. He kept rejecting the work of development, and took those very lightly and humorously. Besides, they also kept pulling the leg of the development workers unnecessarily. They used to create hurdles in every development work of the village. Because of him, many works of the village were halted, be it the car-jeep accessible road to the village, the maintenance of the kuhal or water channel that carries water from the forest pond to the tank in the field, the fencing of the fields to protect them from wild animals. Be it electric fencing or any other work. He used to say that first everyone should come together and resolve the old disputes, only then the work will be done further, just like the stubbornness of Pakistan. They did not understand that with new relationships even old issues get resolved automatically. Well, those old differences of opinion were more imaginary and less factual. When they were invited to attend any function etc. and to sit together, they used to insult even the person who invited them. And did not even come to the function. It was his habit to get angry and stubborn over small matters. He did not maintain any cooperative relationship with the villagers. The sad thing was that his land came in the middle of every development work. But they did not want to let even an inch of their land be used for the welfare of the village. His condition remained the same even when he himself became weak and suffered from illness. It was never known where they wanted to take their land with them. His attitude of non-cooperation was increased by another family. That family was educated, employed, and also financially prosperous. But the young man, the heir of that family, was very cunning, a prankster, had

been in jail, and was a drunkard. Perhaps due to this tension, they too, along with the above mentioned supporting family, started following in his footsteps, albeit as his lackeys. There was such magic of behavior in that opposing leader-family that in most of the cases, it kept the entire area under false illusion.

Friends, I saw that people wanted the ward member to make all their tanks himself and get other work done as well. The ward member was ready to go everywhere with them, ready to help them in every way. He had a lot of passion to work for public welfare and development. He would even put tanks and other works in their name on the shelf for their benefit even without their consent. When the shelf was sanctioned, most of the people would turn away. That way, scheme budget also feared misappropriation If someone's name did not come, he would shout why his name was not put on the shelf. There was a strange laziness prevailing over everyone. People even wanted to keep humiliating and harassing the ward member, and he kept doing all their work himself. Don't know why many people run away from development, when it is a proven fact that whether physical or spiritual development, both are interconnected. The ward member was also from a backward class, perhaps that is why all the people were filled with hollow and self-harming pride. The ward member was my good friend. I traveled with him in my car to every place where he needed me. I also provided him as much financial help as I could when he needed it. Everyone used to taunt me that I had wasted the money. But they were not ready to hear that with his help I had done work worth lakhs.

The village environment has become so corrupt these days that I had planted a bamboo sapling in my field away from home. It was spreading beautifully. After just one year, someone uprooted it along with the soil. Everyone was very surprised by that incident, and were saying that now even trees have started being stolen. Friends, I had brought that bamboo plant from the staff of a nursery of the Forest Department. They had given 20-30 saplings in public interest without any fee. Similarly, I had brought the roots of setaria and Napier variety of grass from the house of a progressive cattle farmer, when I had gone to his house for cow-service work. Once the grass is planted, it keeps spreading on its own. If one of its roots is picked from one place and planted at another place, it becomes a whole bunch of grass.

Friends, water is life, water is soul. That is why water donation has been kept in the category of great donation. There is a popular belief that as long as a water reservoir exists on earth, the person who creates it resides in heaven. That is why in ancient times, kings and rich people used to build wells, stepwells, ponds etc. I felt this effect myself. After making the water reservoir, my soul started feeling cheerful. My Kundalini started moving like water in my mind. I began to feel a strange satisfaction of being full. The tank I had built in the courtyard was going to be used for a long time. That's because who wants to have an empty pit in front of the house? Similarly, my mind started getting more involved in material works also. By arranging water storage in this way, I got many spiritual and material benefits.

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